

Christmas Greetings from

the **VALENT FAMILY**

Steve, Christina, Annika, Katarina & Emilie

Ministering in East Germany

Dresden, Germany in December 2009

Dear Pastor, Family and Friends,

The snow flakes printed on this letter remain wishful thinking here in Dresden... It is warm and rainy, but nevertheless the houses are decorated with Christmas lights to light up the dark evenings. The lights make such a difference in the dark, and not just in the seen world, but much more so in the spiritual realm. The light always overcomes darkness, that is the message of Christmas. That is what happened in Renate's life 5 years ago.



Renate and her dog Izzy

Renate is now part of our Discovery Group and told us her story a few weeks ago. She grew up in East Germany during the Communist years and knew absolutely nothing about Jesus and God. It still amazes us to hear, how people are totally ignorant about the Lord. Renate shared how her Father had an old small Bible with gold page edges and a velvet cover. As children she and her sister used to take out "the book with hairs on it" and touch it and look at it. They had a certain respect for the old book, because their Father had forbidden them to color in it, but they knew nothing about what kind of a book it was. Renate went on with her life, went through some heartache over a broken marriage and raising her son alone. About 5 years ago a friend invited her to come to the Oasis church shortly after it had started. Renate came and got to know the Savior of "the old book" she had seen as a child. When the Oasis celebrated its first baptismal service, Renate was one of those who followed the Lord in baptism. She had always had a desire to be baptized, but at that time she had no idea what it meant. Since then Renate has lived abroad for a few years and grown in her faith, though she also went through some difficult times. Now she has moved back to Dresden and our Discovery Group meets in her apartment. She is a very positive and outgoing person who shares her faith freely.



Our Discovery Group

While Steve was in the USA during May and June of this year, he was able to complete his training for the purpose of setting up and running church planting Boot Camps in Germany and throughout Europe. These intensive training "Boot Camps" have proven to be a successful tool in the USA within many of our A/G USA districts for the purpose of planting vibrant churches. The success rate of church plants using this tool as climbed from 50% to over 80%!

Since Church Planting is becoming a key focus for our AGWM (Assemblies of God World Missions) Europe team, Boot Camps will take on an increasingly vital role in assisting more healthy churches to be planted across the culturally diverse landscape of Europe. Already we have an English speaking Camp scheduled to take place in Brussels Sept. 6-10, 2010 in cooperation with Michael McNamee, and our first German Camp that last week of October 2010. The materials have been translated into German, but since the English manuals are being edited at this time, our German version will also experience some additional changes. We are so thankful for our German National Church Planting Team - they are a joy to work with; they have vision to reach Germany and Europe, they are motivated, skilled, and passionate for the Lord. They are assisting me / or I am assisting them = Team Work, in order to bring this all together.

At the same time we have translated the manual for a Church Renewal Boot Camp. This manual is 90% similar to the Church Planters manual, but with a focus on existing church issues and challenges. We will add this tool to our arsenal with the purpose of assisting our many existing churches in desperate need of a renewal / transformation by God.

Please keep these two critical ministries in your prayers. We believe that the Lord is leading us in this direction, because he is wanting to establish his church more solidly than ever before on this very dark continent of Europe. For this to happen, we need more churches and we need healthy churches - every one shining their light in authentic and relevant ways in order to reach their cities and communities for Christ!

May the Lord bless your Christmas Season as you shine His light!

Steve & Christina Valent



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www.valent-street.com**

